



**NORTHERN COMMITTEE  
NINTH REGULAR SESSION**

2-5 September 2013  
Fukuoka, Japan

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**REPORT ON CMM 2012-06 (PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA)**

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**WCPFC-NC9-2013 /DP-01**

**JAPAN**



## FISHERIES AGENCY

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

1-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8907, Japan

July 31, 2013

Professor Glenn Hurry  
Executive Director  
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission  
P.O. Box 2356, Kolonia,  
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, 96941

Dear Executive Director Hurry,

In accordance with paragraph 4 of the conservation and management measure for Pacific bluefin tuna (CMM2012-06), Japan submits a brief report explaining measures and actions it has introduced and been implementing for Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF) since the 6th Northern Committee meeting.

### Overview of Japanese PBF Fisheries

Japan caught 12,676 tons of PBF on average in the years between 2002-2004, which are the reference years of the CMM 2012-06. Almost all PBF catch were made in the areas under the Japanese jurisdiction and primarily within the territorial waters and internal waters. Also, most of the fisheries activities targeting PBF are seasonal and those fishing vessels target other species outside the PBF fishing season.

The annual catches of PBF by major fishing gears on average in 2002-2004 were as follows; purse seine: 7,643 tons, troll: 2,149 tons, set net: 945 tons, longline: 1,317 tons, and other fisheries: 622 tons.

Management framework and catch trends of those fisheries before the strengthening of the PBF management were as follows;

(1) Purse seine fisheries are managed under the licensing system by the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The number of vessels has been decreasing year by year. The main target species of purse seine are jack mackerel and mackerel, and PBF are caught only during its migration season in the following three fishing grounds: (i) western Japan ground: 0-1 year old fish are caught by 22 vessels. The catch had been increasing since

1990s but decreased in 2012. (ii) Sea of Japan ground: mainly adult fish are caught by 18 vessels. (iii) Pacific ground: mainly adult fish are caught by 24 vessels.

(2) Troll is conducted by small artisanal vessels (smaller than 5 GRT) with one or two fishermen on board. This fishing is traditionally conducted throughout Japan, frequently in isolated islands and remote peninsulas. Most of the fishing grounds are within the territorial waters. The fishing season is a few months and those vessels are engaged in other fisheries such as squid jigging or bottom longline when PBF does not migrate. Because of those circumstances, no management measures for PBF fishing was established either by the national nor prefectural governments and therefore, it was impossible to identify even how many vessels were engaged in PBF fishery annually. On the other hand, since the PBF catch by troll calculated through sales slips from fish markets had been stable, the priority for the management of troll fishery was to understand the current situation for future effort management.

(3) Set nets are managed through the licensing system by the governors of prefectures. The catch of set nets fluctuates substantially year by year but was not increasing in the long run. The number of set net licensed was approximately 1,800. On the other hand, it was difficult for each prefectural government to comprehend the overall picture of PBF management and therefore it was important for the national government to set a grand policy towards the restriction of increase.

(4) Longline vessels are managed through ministerial licensing system. The main target species of longline are bigeye, yellowfin, and albacore and PBF catch by about 664 vessels is seasonal and requires different configuration of fishing gear. The catch is also decreasing.

(5) Most of other fisheries were managed through licensing system, but some of them allowed open entry. Their catch fluctuated but was not increasing in the long run. Therefore, it was considered important to comprehend the current situation for the future effort management of fisheries with open entry.

## **Measures Japan Introduced for PBF Management**

As stated above, most of the Japanese PBF catch are made within the territorial or internal waters of Japan, where WCPFC CMMs are not legally applicable. However, the government of Japan has a policy of implementing a PBF conservation program applicable to the entire PBF fishing activities, based upon WCPFC decisions and ISC advice.

### **1. Purse seine fishery: Set catch limits**

#### **(1) Catch limit for juvenile fish**

An annual catch limit of juvenile PBF – smaller than 30kg – has been in place in purse seine fishery operating the western part of Japan since 2011; the catch limit is 4,500mt, which is

equal to 02-04 average catch and to a 26% reduction from 05-09 average catch. Also in the Pacific side, an annual catch limit of juvenile PBF at 500t, which is the average amount between 2002-2004, was introduced.

## **(2) Catch limit for adult fish**

In addition to the above catch limit for juvenile fish, another catch limit of 2,000mt for adult PBF has been voluntarily introduced during July-August in purse seine fishery operating in the Sea of Japan since 2011.

## **2. Artisanal fisheries:**

### **(1) Introduced a vessel registration system and mandatory reporting**

For artisanal fishery – mostly troll fishery– operating in the Sea of Japan and Eastern China Sea, a registration scheme has been introduced as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, under which all small scale fishing vessels fishing for PBF are required to register. Such registration is accompanied by mandatory reporting of their catch. This registration scheme has been introduced to small scale fishing vessels operating in the Pacific side in April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, 13,100 vessels are on the registration.

### **(2) Shift to a licensing system**

From the 2 years implementation of the registration system, useful data were compiled to understand the nature and scale of artisanal fisheries. Japan is on the process of introducing a limited entry system, which is schedule to start in April 2014 to ensure that total fishing effort by artisanal fisheries shall not increase from the current level.

## **3. Set-net Fishery: Issued a guidance not to increase set-nets for PBF**

In January 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries issued an administrative guidance not to increase the number of licenses of set-nets for PBF to relevant prefectural governments which have the authority to manage this fishery.

## **4. Aquaculture:**

### **(1) Introduced a registration system and mandatory reporting.**

The fry used for PBF farming in Japan is mainly caught by troll fishery. Because of the stricter management of Atlantic bluefin tuna at ICCAT, it is concerned that PBF farming in Japan may increase further. Therefore, in order to collect necessary information, starting in April 2011, all PBF aquaculture sites are required to register and to report their farming activities, including information on caging and harvest. As of March 2013, 140 aquaculture sites are on the registration.

## **(2) Administrative instruction not to expand PBF aquaculture**

As stated above, most of wild seeds for aquaculture are caught by troll fisheries. To prevent an increase in fry catches of troll fisheries, the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries instructed prefectural governments not to increase the number of PBF aquacultures and cases which farm wild seeds in October 2012.

## **5. Import: Strengthened data collection**

### **(1) Korea**

Starting in January 2010, mandatory reporting for each import transaction has been tasked to importers in case they intend to import PBF from Korea. From March 2011, the number of size categories in the reporting format has been expanded from 5 categories to 7 categories in order to acquire more precise data on import of juvenile fish:

**Before February 2011:**

smaller than 2kg, 2 - 3kg, 3 - 5kg, 5 - 50kg, over 50kg

**After March 2011:**

smaller than 2kg, 2 - 3kg, 3 - 5kg, 5 - 10kg, 10 - 30kg, 30 - 50kg, over 50kg

### **(2) Mexico**

Starting in February 2011, mandatory reporting has been tasked to importers in case they intend to import PBF from Mexico.

## **6. Work with other IATTC members**

(1) In May 2011, the NC chair held a meeting with IATTC members who have fisheries for PBF in the eastern Pacific. Japan assisted the NC Chair's work and joined the meeting.

(2) During the 82nd IATTC annual meeting held in July 2011 at La Jolla, the Director General of Fisheries Agency of Japan sent a letter to the Commissioner of Mexican Fisheries Agency (CONAPESCA) calling on Mexico to cooperate in establishing sound conservation and management measures for PBF in the eastern Pacific.

(3) During the 83rd IATTC annual meeting held in June 2012 at La Jolla, Japanese delegation cooperated with IATTC member countries so that Conservation and Management Measures for PBF during 2012 and 2013 was adopted.

(4) During the 85th IATTC annual meeting held in June 2013 at Veracruz (Mexico), Japanese delegation cooperated with IATTC member countries so that Conservation and Management Measures for PBF during 2014 was adopted.

## 7. International Trade of Products derived from Pacific Bluefin tuna

- PBF Import in 2012

According to the trade statistics of Japan, Japan imported 2,661 t of PBF; 1,370t (52%) from Korea followed by Mexico (1,282t, 48%), NZ (8t), Australia (0.7t). (Table1 and Figure1) The lowest import volume was observed in April (21 t) while the highest was observed in May (694 t). (Figure 2)

- PBF Export in 2012

Nineteen (19) t of PBF were exported from Japan in 2012; 50% was to China and 20% was to Thailand. (Table2 and Figure3)

Table1 and Figure1: The amount of import of PBF (Jan.-Dec. 2012) (unit :t)

|             | Fresh | Frozen | Total |
|-------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Korea       | 1,370 | 0      | 1,370 |
| Mexico      | 823   | 459    | 1,282 |
| New Zealand | 8     | 0      | 8     |
| Australia   | 1     | 0      | 1     |
| Palau       | 1     | 0      | 1     |
| Fiji        | 0     | 0      | 0     |
| Total       | 2,202 | 459    | 2,661 |

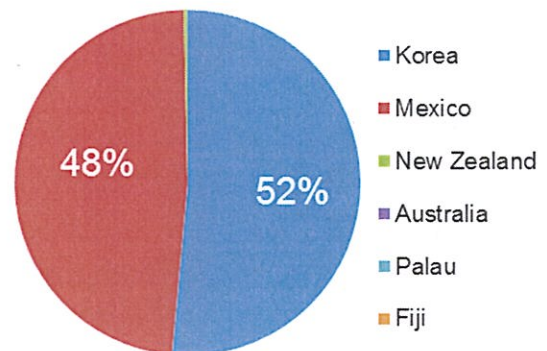


Figure 2: The monthly amount of import of PBT (Jan.-Dec. 2012) (unit : t)

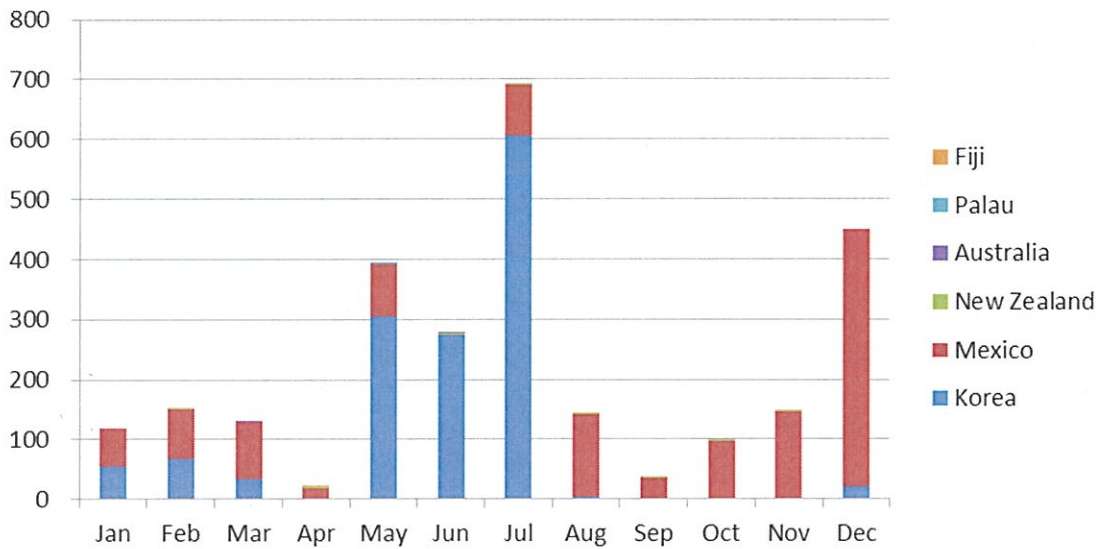
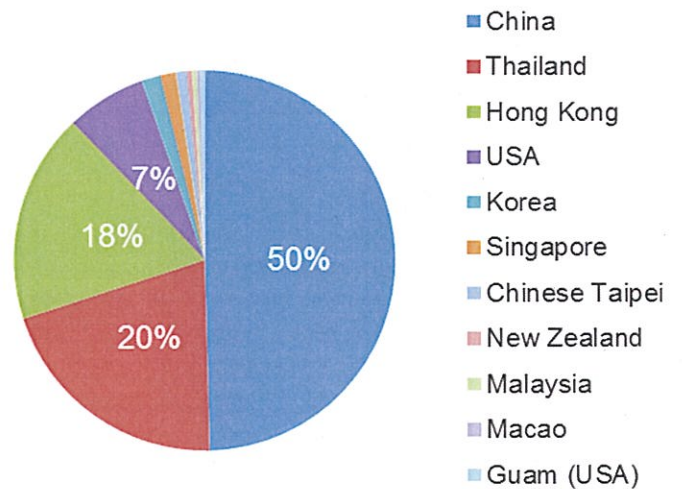


Table2 and Figure3: The amount of export of PBF (Jan.-Dec. 2012) (unit : t)

|                | Fresh | Frozen | Total |
|----------------|-------|--------|-------|
| China          | 9.8   | 0.0    | 9.8   |
| Thailand       | 4.0   | 0.1    | 4.0   |
| Hong Kong      | 3.5   | 0.0    | 3.5   |
| USA            | 1.4   | 0.0    | 1.4   |
| Korea          | 0.0   | 0.3    | 0.3   |
| Singapore      | 0.3   | 0.0    | 0.3   |
| Chinese Taipei | 0.2   | 0.0    | 0.2   |
| New Zealand    | 0.1   | 0.0    | 0.1   |
| Malaysia       | 0.1   | 0.0    | 0.1   |
| Macao          | 0.1   | 0.0    | 0.1   |
| Guam (USA)     | 0.1   | 0.0    | 0.1   |
| Total          | 19.4  | 0.4    | 19.8  |



● PBF Import in 2013 (As of 30, June)

In addition to the trade statistics in 2013, import data from Korea and Mexico as of 30 June are available in accordance with article 10, the Special Law for Conservation Measure of Tuna Resources. The amount of import PBF from Mexico was 1,854 t\*, and 517 t from Korea. (Figure4).

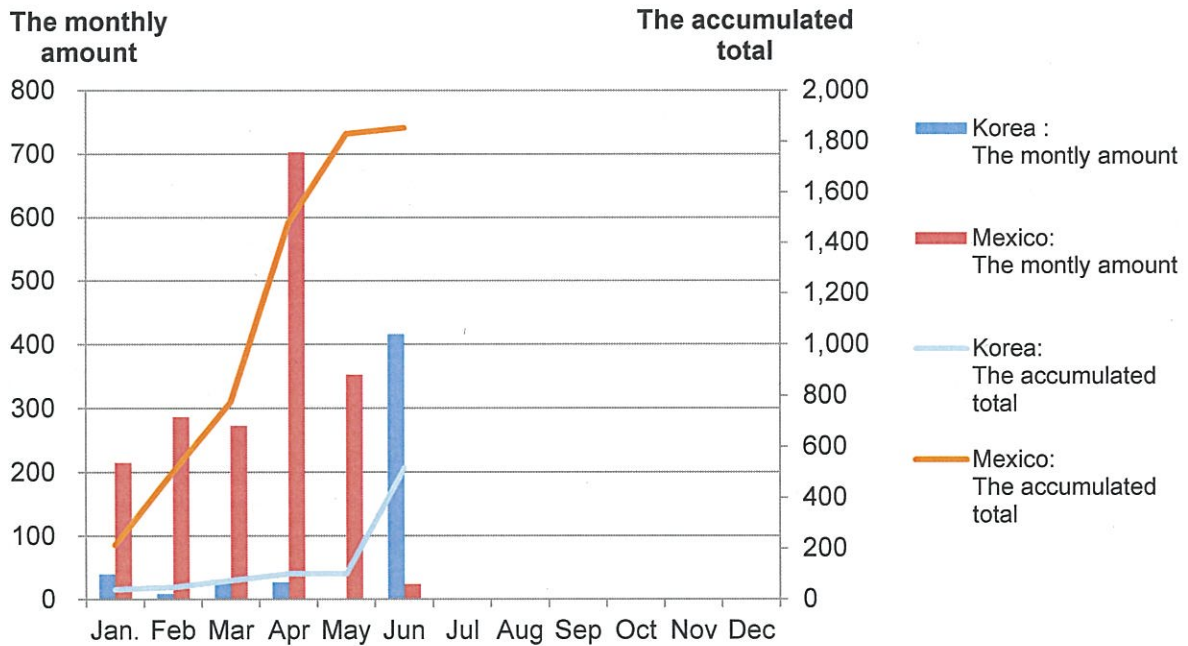
Difference of imported fish between Mexico and Korea are;

Mexico: Age 2 fish caught and exported after 1 year farming

Korea: Age 1 fish exported immediately after caught.

\*The amount of PBF was underestimated because some importers do not submit the information about their import.

Figure4: The monthly amount of import of PBF (Jan.-June. 2013) (unit: t)





Sincerely yours,

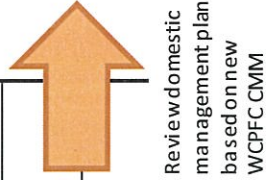
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Takashi KOYA". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "T" and "K".

Takashi KOYA

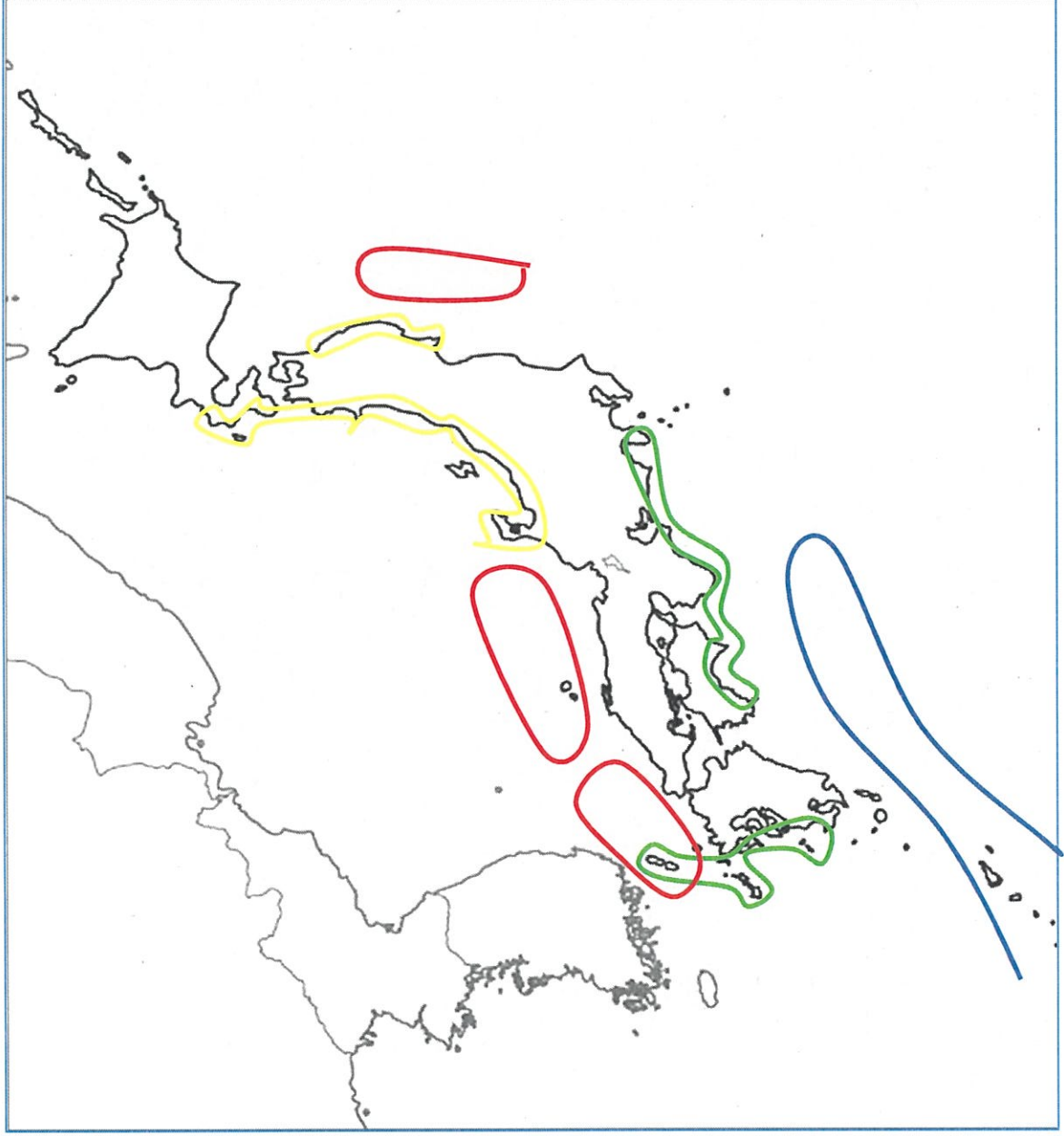
Alternative Japanese Commissioner to WCPFC

# Strengthened Plan of Management Scheme for Pacific Bluefin Tuna in Japan

|                    |                                | 2010   | 2011      | 2012      |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| Fishery management | Coastal fishery                | Set net: Administrative instruction not to increase the number of licenses of set nets for PBF                   | Jan.2010~ |           |
|                    |                                | Troll: Registration system and mandatory reporting for artisanal fishery in Sea of Japan and Eastern China Sea   | Apr.2011~ |           |
|                    |                                | Troll: Registration system and mandatory reporting for artisanal fishery in the Pacific side and Seto Inland Sea | Apr.2012~ |           |
|                    | Offshore fishery (Purse Seine) | Catch limit for juveniel and adult in purse seine fishery in Sea of Japan and Eastern China Sea                  | Apr.2011~ |           |
|                    |                                | Catch limit for juveniel in purse seine fishery in Pacific side  | Apr.2012~ |           |
|                    |                                | Registration and mandatory reporting for farming activities  | Jan.2011~ |           |
|                    | Aquaculture                    | Publication of farming activities  |           | Mar.2012~ |
|                    |                                | Administrative instruction not to expand PBF aquaculture   |           | Oct.2012~ |
|                    |                                | Mandatory reporting for rachimport transaction   | Jan.2010~ |           |
|                    |                                | Request for trading companies not to increase import   | Jan.2011~ |           |
| Import management  | Import from Korea              | Mandatory reporting for rachimport transaction   | Feb.2011~ |           |
|                    |                                | Request for trading companies not to increase import   | Sep.2011~ |           |
|                    | Import from Mexico             | Request for trading companies not to increase import   |           |           |



Major PBF Fishing Ground Around Japanese Water by fishing gear



- Purse seine
- Troll
- Set net
- Long line